

DRAFT

Harper PTO Meeting

September 14, 2011

President Michaela Shaw called the meeting to order at 9:15 am.

The minutes from the May 2011 PTO meeting were approved.

Motions Approved

- A motion was approved to amend Article VIII – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS Section 4 of the Bylaws.

Principal's Report – Dr. Susan Kick

- Sharon Murray is the new teacher representative.
- Lights over the murals in the auditorium were installed.
- We have a new computer lab in room 10. Now the students come to Miss Pinney.
- Kaitlyn Phillips is the new secretary. Now we need to fill the half-time afternoon position.
- Senor Polese is due to have a baby. We are looking for a substitute for her.
- Both curriculum nights went well.

Faculty Report – Sharon Murray/ Teacher Representative

- Thank you for the cookies, luncheon and for all your efforts.

Committee Reports:

Harper Hoedown – Margie Karabas

- The Hoedown is this Sunday. The rain date is on October 2nd. If we need to cancel due to weather, we will send an e-mail out on Saturday. The pirate ship is coming back. The pie eating contest will be back. We will have great food from the Grecian Kitchen and good humor ice cream. We are still in need of volunteers. We will be sending out emails to the room parents. If you want to volunteer, you can also send an e-mail to Margie or Laura Smith. We are still taking donations. Advanced ticket sales are a little lower than we would like. You can still buy tickets online until Friday. Laura Smith will send out an e-mail regarding what time you are assigned to volunteer. Older kids who have graduated from Harper can work the Hoedown or they can also help set up.

Parent Social – Laura Mostofi

- The Parent Social is on Saturday, October 1st at Pinstripes. We have had a good response but it is still important to get the word out. There will be bowling, bocce and appetizers. We extended the deadline to next Friday the 23rd. You can sign up online or drop a check off at

lobby. We need to give a final count to Pinstripes the week before. We can accommodate maybe a handful of walk-ins. Eight lanes will be blocked off for us. We will have the outdoor court to ourselves too.

- Michaela added that people need to realize that there are no more room parent parties, cocktail parties or benefits. This is in lieu of those parties. We moved the party to October because March was too hectic. We will send out a reminder via the room parents some time later today. It will also have Chess Club and Hoedown information. It's a good idea to say in the e-mail that this is not a fundraiser and that there are no other parent parties.

Chess Club – Eileen Hart

- The Chess Club starts this Monday. Chess wizards will do three sessions. Fall enrollment is usually low which is true for this year. We have about 20 people signed up and we can have 45 people. Some other Wilmette schools want to do a Saturday chess drop in at the library starting in November.

Family Area Network (FAN) / Ann Garrison

- On September 27th at 7:00 pm, Jean Kilbourn will be doing a presentation called "Too Sexy Too Soon". This will be at St. Faith Hope and Charity. This month's Quintessential New Trier has an article about the author. We will post future events in the Harper Happenings.

PASS 39 – Michaela Shaw

- PASS 39 is an organization for parents with children with special needs. It meets monthly and the first meeting is Monday, September 19th. It is a good resource to meet people. If anyone is interested, contact Michaela.

Environmental Awareness / Farm to School – Diane Schaffner and Sarah Chandraraj

- There are some green guidelines for school activities developed by Go Green Wilmette. When planning events, there are some things to keep in mind such as minimize waste and encourage recycling. The first week of October is Environmental Awareness Week. Later on this year, we would like to have a week long campaign regarding idling, especially when it's colder outside and more people are driving.
- There is another initiative called Farm to School headed by Sarah Chandraraj. The movement is hard to get off the ground because it is expensive to get organic food to the cafeteria, so we are going to try other things. In October, we are looking at just a series of activities to increase education regarding where food comes from and impact on health. We are looking to do a local apple tasting for kids and then there would be a vote. The winning apple would be featured in a lunch time give-away. We are looking at other activities in the Harper Garden such as meet the beekeeper. We are open to ideas. We are discussing whether Farm to School should be a committee, subcommittee, etc. Diane spearheaded this year – the presentation was spectacular.

- Someone suggested that the classrooms purchase plate and cups to use at the parties.

Foundation - Michelle (Last name?)

- Harper can apply for grants through the Foundation. Harper used money received from the grant for murals, materials for Exploratorium and speaker to come in and talk about African history. Most of the school gardens are paid for by the Foundation. The Foundation is also funding Wilmette Shakespeare. They will have Shakespeare flash mobs with students doing Shakespeare plays at the soccer fields or sword play in the halls. The library and the Wilmette Theater are working with us. The library is putting on a Shakespeare play on November 6th. We can get tickets for free. The play is a Midsummer Night's Dream.

President's Report – Michaela Shaw

- Cliff has been treasurer for 5 years. We need to amend the bylaws. The old bylaw was section 8. The amendment is as follows:

Amendment to the Bylaws – Article VIII – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS Section 4. A vacancy occurring in any elective office or standing committee shall be filled by the Executive Board at its next regular meeting. At its discretion, the Executive Board may waive term limitations to fill a vacancy by temporary appointment until a qualified officer is elected.

- We have added that “at its discretion”. Cliff's position is open until someone wants to take it.
- The motion was approved and seconded.

Treasurer's report – Michaela Shaw on behalf of Cliff Ruemmler

- Give early give often.

Room parents – Sally McQueen and Melissa Murray

- We have two room parents for each classroom. A little change is that in the past, room parents would collect \$5 to \$15 from each parent to put in a classroom fund to help offset the cost of parties and any parent that wanted to be reimbursed. This was about \$200. We found at the end of last year, we had a lot of left over money. We found on average each classroom was reimbursing about \$50. The PTO has now established a classroom fund of \$50. The teachers also have a PTO fund of \$10 dollars per student per class. The fund is there for people who would like to help, but financially they cannot help. Please make sure it's not the same people volunteering.
- Dr. Kick talked about the snack change. As a district, there are much stricter policies about food in the classrooms. At other schools, there were very significant incidents because of food in the classroom. We are done with the days of homemade cookies and cupcakes. Everything has to be prepackaged with ingredients. We can't have someone prepare something in their kitchen at

home. For example, the first grade does a monster buffet. The carrots will now have to be prepackaged. Another tricky thing is watermelon. It cannot be cut up at home but it can be cut up at Harper. This doesn't have to do with snack, just classroom parties.

- One parent said prepackaging works to some extent, but she has had problems with some packaged goods from grocery store bakeries. Not every restaurant is safe either.

Enrichment – Susan Locke and Senta Plunkett

- No news.

Ways and Means - Shelley Shelley and Jennifer Beacom

- The Book Fair is still looking for volunteers. It will be on November 14th, 15th and 16th. Email Melissa Meers if you would like to volunteer. The taffy apple sale is in October 5th and 6th. ATG is doing really well. They are close to 40 percent. Please donate \$100 per child. ATG is in lieu of the benefit. The money from ATG funds most enrichment programs. Total participation last year was about 67 percent. We are not doing wrapping paper sales. ATG, Grocery Dollars, taffy apple sale and school kits are the only fundraisers. There is no benefit and no bizarre. Harper Hoedown is not a fundraiser either.

Social Worker Pam Mark gave a presentation on "Second Step".

Michaela Shaw adjourned the PTO meeting at 10:16 am.

Respectfully submitted by,

Danielle Ruben